

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly Newscast

February 14th, 2014

Lessons prepared by Barbara Edmondson, Kim Chaba-Armstrong & Justine Light

Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

| | |
|--|---|
| sportsmanship (being a fair, polite athlete) | ceremony (formal event) |
| gave up (to allow someone to take something) | compete (to play against others) |
| flag bearer (person who carries the flag) | Twitter (online social media) |
| campaign (to collect votes to win) | trials (test runs - to see if a team/person is fast enough) |

1. We encourage children to practice good _____ when they participate in competitions.
2. Hayley Wickenheiser, a Canadian hockey player, was the _____ for Canada in the opening _____ of the Sochi Olympic Games.
3. In the Olympics, athletes from around the world _____ against each other to see who is the best in their sport.
4. When there are many athletes doing one sport, they often have _____ to see who is the fastest or best among them. These athletes then compete for gold.
5. _____ is a popular form of media many people use to communicate and learn about others.
6. The hockey player accidentally _____ the puck and the other team got a goal.
7. There is a _____ in my community to build a new skating rink. I hope we get enough votes!

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Chronological Order

Organize the following statements in the order they occurred (**not** the order you heard them in the listening.) *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ____ Morrison started a Twitter campaign to have Junio chosen to be Canada's flag-bearer at the closing ceremony of the Sochi Olympics.
2. ____ Denny Morrison fell during the Olympic team trials (and could not go on to the medals).
3. ____ Morrison is so grateful to Junio, he feels like cutting his medal in half.
4. ____ Gilmore Junio passed the trials, but gave his place in the 1,000 metre race to Morrison.
5. ____ Morrison won a silver medal in the 1,000 metre speed skating race on Wednesday.
6. ____ Junio said it was "in the best interest of the team," because Morrison was faster than him.

Discussion Questions

Have you been watching the Olympics? Which sports in the Winter Olympics are new to you? Would you be interested in trying any of the Winter Olympic sports?

News story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the group of synonyms (words with similar meaning) that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

| Answer | Word from the story | Related words |
|--------|---------------------|--|
| | 1) openly | a) leader mentor |
| | 2) All-American | b) important event serious occurrence |
| | 3) teammate | c) public information not hiding |
| | 4) coach | d) colleague co-player |
| | 5) defensive end | e) quit due to age stop doing an activity |
| | 6) big deal | f) typical person every day American |
| | 7) retiring | g) protecting position guard |

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

draft – teams choose new players

mid-round draft pick – a player chosen not first, but in the middle; a fairly good player

come out – (**figure of speech**) to publicly tell people you are gay; to disclose one's sexual orientation

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **True** or **False**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ____ The NFL has its first openly gay player.
2. ____ Michael Sam is a typical American from Missouri.
3. ____ Sam's coach and teammates did not know he was gay.
4. ____ No one has come out while in the National Football League before.
5. ____ Sam is not expected to be drafted to the NFL this year.
6. ____ Sam's current coach is proud of him.
7. ____ There have been several NFL players who came out after leaving the NFL.

Discussion Questions

What response do you think Michael Sam's coming out will get from American football fans? Why do you think no NFL player has come out before?

News story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

| Answer | Word | Definition |
|--------|-----------------|--|
| | 1. obscure | a) a system of money in a particular place |
| | 2. federal | b) unknown and not commonly understood |
| | 3. budget | c) the central or national government |
| | 4. digital | d) moving in a way that is likely to lead to success |
| | 5. currency | e) a plan for how to spend all of the money for a year |
| | 6. financing | f) clearly explained |
| | 7. specific | g) using electronic technology |
| | 8. legal | h) following the laws |
| | 9. on track | i) related to written laws |
| | 10. legislative | j) providing payment for something |

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

money laundering - a way that criminals can hide money they have got from illegal means

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. The _____ budget announced changes to the Bitcoin currency. | a) provincial b) federal |
| 2. Bitcoin is a _____ currency. | a) digital b) paper-based |
| 3. The government wants to stop _____ from laundering money. | a) citizens b) criminals |
| 4. Dave Bradley, who runs Bitcoin Brains in _____ is _____ to the new rules. | a) Calgary/looking forward b) Edmonton/ not looking forward to. |
| 5. The date for the new laws about Bitcoin _____. | a) is scheduled for 2014 b) has not yet been scheduled. |

Discussion Questions

Have you ever heard of the Bitcoin currency? What reasons would people have for using a digital currency?

Language Focus

Noticing Comparatives and Superlatives

Comparatives are adjectives we use to compare two things, ideas or concepts. Comparatives show how two things are related to each other.

Superlatives are adjectives we use to compare three or more things, ideas or concepts. Superlatives show which of the 3 or more things are the best or worst.

Forming the comparative and superlative

| Adjective form | Comparative | Superlative |
|---|---|--|
| 1- syllable with more than one consonant at the end, or more than one vowel | -add _____ er than <i>smaller, taller, colder, longer, louder</i> | - add the _____ est <i>smallest, tallest, coldest, longest, loudest</i> |
| 1- syllable ending with an e | -add _____ r than <i>nicer, wider, wiser</i> | - add the _____ est <i>nicest, widest, wisest</i> |
| 1- syllable ending with one vowel and one consonant | -add (second consonant) _____ er than <i>hotter, bigger, thinner</i> | -add the _____ (second consonant) _____ est <i>hottest, biggest, thinnest</i> |
| 2- syllables ending in y | Change y to i and add _____ er <i>happier, busier</i> | Change y to i and add _____ est <i>happiest, busiest</i> |
| 2- syllables or more | more _____ than <i>more interesting than, more creative than</i> | the most _____ <i>the most interesting, the most creative</i> |

Look at some example sentences about the Sochi Olympics to see how the comparative and superlative are used:

Denny Morrison is **faster than** Gilmore Junio.

Stephan Groothuis won gold in the 1000m speed skating. He is **the fastest** speed skater. (He is faster than many other skaters.)

Canadian sisters Chloé and Justine Dufour-Lapointe won gold and silver in women's moguls. Chloé got **the highest** score, even **higher than** her sister.

Canadian women also did very well in free style skiing. Kim Lamarre won the bronze with a **lower** score **than** Devin Logan (US) and Dara Howell. Dara Howell had **the highest** score, because she had **the fastest** run and **the highest** jumps with **the most difficulty**. Dara Howell from Canada won gold.

When you are watching the Olympics try to use the comparative and superlative to explain the results of your favorite events.

Transcripts of Weekly News Stories

| | FEBRUARY 14 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES | TIME |
|--------------|---|------|
| Introduction | Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for February 14 th . | 0:00 |
| Story 1 | Some golden sportsmanship resulted in a silver medal for Canada at the Winter Olympics in Sochi. Denny Morrison has started a Twitter campaign to have his teammate Gilmore Junio chosen as Canada's flag-bearer for the closing ceremony of the Sochi Olympics. Morrison's silver medal win in the men's 1,000-metre speed skating race Wednesday is thanks to Junio. Morrison, who is the faster skater of the two, had fallen during the Olympic team trials but Junio, who is from Calgary, gave up his place in the race so that Morrison could compete. Junio said for Morrison to be in the race would be, quote, "in the best interest of the team." Morrison says he feels like cutting the silver medal in half to share it with Junio. | 0:10 |
| Story 2 | The National Football League may be about to have its first openly gay player. Missouri All-American, Michael Sam says he is gay, and that his teammates and coaches have known for a long time. Sam says it's, quote "a big deal. No one has done this before." The 255-pound defensive end is expected to be a mid-round NFL draft pick. Missouri coach, Gary Pinkel said in a statement he is proud of Sam. There have been several NFL players who have come out after retiring from the NFL. | 1:17 |
| Story 3 | One of the more obscure parts of Tuesday's federal budget involves bitcoin - a digital currency. The government plans to bring in changes to the law to try to control the online currency. The new laws will try to protect against money laundering and financing criminal activity. Dave Bradley runs Bitcoin Brains in Calgary. He's looking forward to having some rules. He says the world of online currency needs specific rules to keep the legal bitcoin industry in Canada on track. No legislative changes have been scheduled yet. | 2:07 |

Appendix: Answer Keys

News story 1

Vocabulary

1. We encourage children to practice good sportsmanship when they participate in competitions.
2. Hayley Wickenheiser, a Canadian hockey player, was the flag bearer for Canada in the opening ceremony of the Sochi Olympic Games.
3. In the Olympics, athletes from around the world compete against each other to see who is the best in their sport.
4. When there are many athletes doing one sport, they often have trials to see who is the fastest or best among them. These athletes then compete for gold.
5. Twitter is a popular form of media many people use to communicate and learn about others.
6. The hockey player accidentally gave up the puck and the other team got a goal.
7. There is a campaign in my community to build a new skating rink. I hope we get enough votes!

Listening

1. 5/6 Morrison started a Twitter campaign to have Junio chosen to be Canada's flag-bearer at the closing ceremony of the Sochi Olympics.
2. 1 Denny Morrison fell during the Olympic team trials (and could not go on to the medals).
3. 5/6 Morrison is so grateful to Junio, he feels like cutting his medal in half.
4. 2 Gilmore Junio passed the trials but gave his place in the 1,000 metre race to Morrison.
5. 4 Morrison won a silver medal in the 1,000 metre speed skating race on Wednesday.
6. 3 Junio said it was "in the best interest of the team," because Morrison was faster than him.

News story 2

Vocabulary

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|----------|---------------------|--|
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| f | 2) All-American | b) important event serious occurrence |
| d | 3) teammate | c) public information not hiding |
| a | 4) coach | d) colleague co-player |
| g | 5) defensive end | e) quit due to age stop doing an activity |
| b | 6) big deal | f) typical person every day American |
| e | 7) retiring | g) protecting position guard |

Listening

1. F The NFL has its first openly gay player.
2. T Michael Sam is a typical American from Missouri.
3. F Sam's coach and teammates did not know he was gay.
4. T No one has come out while in the NFL before.
5. F Sam is not expected to be drafted to the NFL this year.
6. T Sam's current coach is proud of him.
7. T There have been several NFL players who came out after leaving the NFL.

News story 3

Vocabulary

| Answer | Word | Definition |
|--------|-----------------|--|
| b | 1. obscure | a) a system of money in a particular place |
| c | 2. federal | b) unknown and not commonly understood |
| e | 3. budget | c) the central or national government |
| g | 4. digital | d) moving in a way that is likely to lead to success |
| a | 5. currency | e) a plan for how to spend all of the money for a year |
| j | 6. financing | f) clearly explained |
| f | 7. specific | g) using electronic technology |
| h | 8. legal | h) following the laws |
| d | 9. on track | i) related to written laws |
| i | 10. legislative | j) providing payment for something |

Listening

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| 1. The federal budget announced changes to the Bitcoin currency. | a) provincial b) federal |
| 2. Bitcoin is a digital currency. | a) digital b) paper-based |
| 3. The government wants to stop criminals from laundering money. | a) citizens b) criminals |
| 4. Dave Bradley, who runs Bitcoin Brains in Calgary is looking forward to the new rules. | a) Calgary/looking forward b) Edmonton/ not looking forward to. |
| 5. The date for the new laws about Bitcoin has not yet been scheduled. | a) is scheduled for 2014 b) has not yet been scheduled. |